and water quality monitoring in this stretch. The findings of CPCB revealed that low flow in the river and sudden release of water from Gokul Barrage, might have resulted in scouring of organic matter in the river bed and that high quantity of organic matter might have lead to depletion of oxygen in the river water causing fish mortality.

(e) The CPCB has issued directions under Section 18(1)(b) of the Water Act, 1974, to Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board, Haryana State Pollution Control Board and Delhi Pollution Control Committee for taking steps to properly operate and maintain the sewage treatment plants, provide facilities for collection and treatment of sewage in the State and to comply with the effluent standards stgringently for industries located along river Yamuna.

PM's Intervention in imports of genetically modified foods

349. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Agriculture has sought Prime Minister's intervention to make imports of genetically modified foods transparent;

(b) if so, whether in the absence of an appropriate frame-work, GM foods were entering the country;

(c) whether there have been reports that India was importing huge quantities of Soya oils, extracted from GM seeds;

(d) whether the Ministry of Agriculture had also written to his Ministry to issue necessary notification under the Environment Protection Act, 1986; and

(e) if so, what has been the Prime Minister's response on this issue?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It is not correct to say that there is no appropriate framework for import of GM foods in the country. Rule 11 of the Manufacture, use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells, 1989 notified under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, provides that foods stuffs, ingredients in food stuffs

and additives including processing aids containing or consisting of genetically engineered organisms or cells, shall not be produced, sold, imported or used except with the approval of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC). Thus, import of genetically modified food requires the approval of GEAC. There is no such information available in this Ministry that huge quantities of soya oil extracted from GM seeds is imported in the country.

(d)The Ministry of Agriculture requested the Ministry of Environment and Forests to issue a notification under the Environment (Protection) Act making it binding on importers to declare whether the commodity being imported is of GM or non-GM origin, and in case of GM to obtain a necessary permit from the Ministry of Environment and Forests for its import.

(e) The Prime Minister's office convened an interministerial meeting to discuss issues in biotechnology regulation. The meeting decided that a small group be set up to review the existing structure of biotechnology regulation and suggest measures for changes, if required.

Environment Action Plan for Bangalore

350. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Karnataka Government had forwarded an Environment Action Plan for Bangalore city for consideration of his Ministry in the Ninth Plan period; and

(b) if so, whether Government had considered the proposal for clearance under the Ninth Five Year Plan; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. However, the proposal could not be considered in the Ninth Plan period.

Rejection of Bt. cotton seeds

†351. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the produce of Bt. cotton seeds developed

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.